



FAMILY NEWSLETTER

May, 2004

News and Information for Families of individuals at Muscatatuck SDC during the transition to community-based services.



Dear Families and Guardians,

For many families, talking to someone who has been through a similar experience can go a long way toward helping to find the most appropriate setting in the community for their loved one. The Family and Social Services Administration and the Arc of Indiana can connect you with just that person: Nanette Whightsel.

Nanette's daughter, Suzette, lived at New Castle State Developmental Center until it closed in 1998. Suzette, who will be 40 in June, is now thriving in the community, and Nanette is working with the Arc of Indiana, talking with families of current Muscatatuck residents who have questions or want to talk about finding the most appropriate home for their loved one. She has spoken with more than 70 families of the 104 residents remaining at Muscatatuck.

You can reach Nanette at 1-800-382-9100 (toll free); 1-317-977-2375; 1-317-902-7169(cell phone); or by e-mail at nwhightsel@arcind.org. Look for more information about Suzette's life in the community next month, including the house she is buying close to her mother.

Nanette is a wonderful resource for families, and we hope you'll take her up on her offer to chat.

Sincerely,

Kristen Schunk, Director,
FSSA Division of Disability,
Aging and Rehabilitative Services

Agreement Reached for Reuse Land

Officials have reached agreement on reuse plans for the grounds of Muscatatuck State Developmental Center that allow for development of an industrial park and management of recreational areas.

The agreement-reached through the cooperation of the Indiana Family & Social Services Administration, Purdue University, the Departments of Natural Resources, Administration and Commerce and Jennings County officials—transfers existing state land to Purdue and allows Jennings County to use other land for economic development.

Purdue will use the transferred land to continue its agricultural research at the Southeast Purdue Agricultural Center, which focuses on grain crops, forestry and horticulture. Teams of Purdue professors, graduate students and technicians conduct about 50 research projects at the center at any given time.

"This agreement is a win for Jennings County and for all Hoosiers," Governor Joe Kernan said. "Developing an industrial park will bring jobs, and Purdue will be able to further its agricultural research at the Southeast-Purdue Agricultural Center. That's good news for our state's economy and our efforts to move Indiana forward."

Under terms of the Memorandum of Understanding, signed by Governor Kernan and Purdue President Martin Jischke:

- The Jennings County Economic Development Commission may assume up to 140 acres of current Purdue land within the next 10 years to build an industrial park. As projects are identified and commitments secured, the land will be transferred. After these 140 acres are developed, an additional 240 acres of Purdue land will be made available if the university finds another suitable location for the Southeast-Purdue Agricultural Center.
- The State will transfer some of Muscatatuck's land to Purdue, including recreational areas that will continue to be operated by the Department of Natural Resources. After Muscatatuck's buildings are razed, Purdue also has the option of assuming that land for agritourism and research.

If you have questions about your loved one's transition into the community, please contact our Transitions Team at 1-812-346-4401

Southeast Region Developmental Disabilities Coordinator: Cindy Speer, ext. 1272
Transition and Placement Specialist: Janie Lee, ext. 1965
Facilitators: Christy Swango, ext. 1222
Patty Cook, ext. 1290
Ken Biddinger, ext. 1702
Cindie Underwood, ext. 1653
Service Coordinators: Melinda Galliher, ext. 1208
Anne Norris, ext. 1229

Information to Keep in Mind

Indiana Protection & Advocacy Services:
317-722-5555 or
1-800-622-4845

Div. of Disability, Aging & Rehab. Services:
800-545-7763

Div. of Mental Health & Addiction:
800-901-1133

MSDC/MSH Information Hot Line:
800-903-9822

Ombudsman:
800-622-4484

*"The difference between stumbling blocks
and stepping stones is the way a person
uses them."
- Unknown*

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«Name»
«Address»
«City»